



## Canoe Slalom International Panel (IP) 2021 Selection – COVID-19 Update

This statement follows the publication of the 2021 selection policies in mid-December 2020 and aims to provide an update whilst recognising a very uncertain landscape for the next few months. The panel wish to acknowledge the ongoing challenges to the whole community not only to training but the health, financial and emotional challenges that the covid-19 pandemic continues to inflict.

As we approach one year since covid-19 became a reality in the UK, it is clear that the consequences are unlikely to relent imminently and as the uncertainty continues, the IP wishes to provide the following updates below reflecting recent discussions:

### **General Overview:**

The IP will continue to base all decisions on the safety of athletes, volunteers and staff, compliance with government guidelines and setting a transparent process under challenging circumstances. The IP recognise that 2 senior boats in each event have already been selected but feel strongly that if it is safe to race, we should be striving to select full teams to provide opportunities that have been missed by all over the last 18 months.

Subject to the ongoing restrictions, the IP believes that the International season will proceed as planned if at all possible. It is necessary therefore to adjust the policy in line with exceptional circumstances outlined in section 1.5 item 6 of the policy.

It is clear that senior selection cannot happen in March as intended but subject to final agreement from the venue there is an intent to reschedule to the weekend of the 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and we continue to seek opportunities to get training access on the Lee Valley course within government guidance ahead of this.

The IP is working with the slalom committee to identify a way to create a race weekend that provides a covid-19 secure framework and believe that with the nature of our sport being outdoors, a selection series can take place but there will be mitigations taken to create an acceptable risk such as:

- Limiting access to the site to athletes, officials and coaching staff only
- Changing the format of racing such as splitting the events across different days and completing selection in one day of racing by changing the number of counting runs etc.
- Reducing the list of eligible athletes based upon the order of selection qualification for 2021 selection
- Reserving any access for training prior to selection to those athletes who remain eligible under any revised system
- With the likely need to reduce the field, there are unlikely to be further opportunities to qualify for the selection process.

It is necessary to state that the default position of the IP will be to revert to the outcome of the 2019 senior team spring selection series in the selection of the 3<sup>rd</sup> boat and reserves until such time as a 2021 senior team selection process can be completed.

### **Junior & U23 selection**

For now we are hopeful of junior & U23 selection being able to go ahead as planned in May 2021 at Holme Pierrepont. We cannot however rule out restrictions being necessary as



outlined above to enable the staging of an appropriate selection series. Whilst the IP desire to identify an additional opportunity for a defined number of athletes to qualify into junior team selection, it is too early to commit to this and given the context of the challenges of staging selection this may not be possible. The IP will continue to review this.

The IP know that you all want certainty to plan but we quite simply cannot commit further at present but will commit to another update near the end of February. In the meantime, please ensure that you register by 3rd March 2021 [here](#). We will continue to review the landscape and will base our decisions on the safety of athletes, volunteers and staff, compliance with government guidelines and setting a transparent process under challenging circumstances.

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